

The great sixteen-coach C.N.R. transcontinental carrying a party of discoverers over the most modern railway bridge in British Columbia.

20TH CENTURY DISCOVERERS

What the C.N.R. Transcontinental Party Found Out About Canada on the Trip from Quebec to Vancouver

A KEEN-EYED, "from-Missouri" newspaperman up from New York, got off the train somewhere in the Rocky Mountains a couple of weeks ago and wired a bunch of copy to his paper. He took a fresh glance at the long train coiled on the track like a huge serpent with one engine for a head, and he made his wire say to the New York editor that the trip of this official train of sixteen coaches hauled by one engine from Quebec to Vancouver, was the greatest railway event in the history of all America. He had made a discovery, and he represented a great newspaper.

But that was only one of many discoveries made on this memorable trip from Quebec to Vancouver. The man from New York and the men from Chicago, from Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg and a dozen other places enroute made discoveries, also. The New York reporter was impressed mainly with one thing: that for easy curves, low gradients and everything that reduces haulage-difficulty to a minimum, this new C.N.R. transcontinental is the most modern engineering product in America. Threading new territory, even for Canada, it has chosen the easiest way in and out. From tide-water at Quebec to tide-water at Vancouver, 3,000 miles west, the party of hard-headed newspapermen, members of Parliament and experienced travellers found a road of marvellous ease and comfort in travel.

A MERE preliminary. The second discovery made by this party of men from any kind of Missouri was that territories which a few days before had seemed off the map altogether were productive of local traffic along the line of this new transcontinental. The old Mackenzie and Mann trick—of making a road earn its keep along its own mileage. In the party of Senators were a number of experienced lumbermen who were impressed with the great quantities of cedar along the British Columbia sections of the road. The valley of the North Thompson is full of cedar, and just back of the valley are other cedar-wooded valleys, tributary and easily accessible. Among the cedar landscapes there were settlements, out-tricklings from the stream of population further eastward, taking hold of fruit districts.

The clay belt was another surprise. Between Sudbury and Port Arthur the new road runs along the southern edge of the clay belt which for years has been a source of doubt to people in older Ontario. Fifteen years ago a 1900 survey of the Ontario Government stated that the clay belt contained a territory larger than the States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Jer-



Mr. D. B. Hanna, 3rd Vice-President of the C.N.R., kept his hands in his pockets on that trip like Gen. Joffre.

sey combined, nearly all of it adaptable for cultivation, with plenty of wood for fuel and building and commercial purposes. Still the pessimists doubted. The C.N.R. party had an opportunity of discovering that the pessimists were all wrong. They saw vast forests of pulpwood, somewhat undersized, but yet commercially valuable. When the train stopped they examined the soil and discussed its potentialities. Finally, after consultation, they all decided that the district through which the C.N.R. passes is capable of growing the finest crops provided the climate is right.

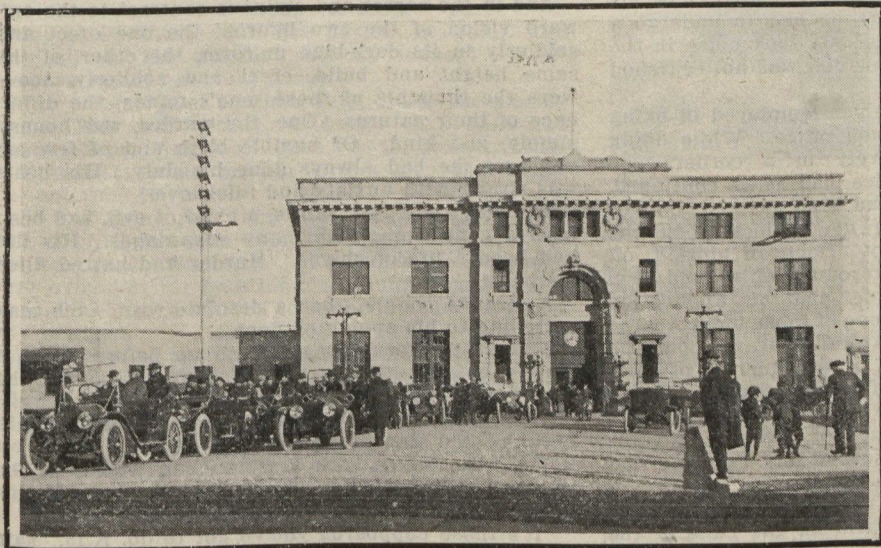
THE third discovery is not less important. They found that Canadian prosperity is returning by way of the Western Provinces. The first rumbles of the financial storm of 1913 and 1914 came from the west. When the west's land boom broke, people thought prices far gone for a generation. Hence, with genuine adaptability, they turned from land speculation to land cultivation, and hence they have the greatest crop in their history. Now the towns confess to a "slightly smaller" population without a bit of shame!

The party was taken around what is practically a belt line, on the way west visiting Brandon and Regina, traversing the southern portions of the Provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, thence north through Saskatoon and Central Saskatchewan to Edmonton, returning through Humboldt, Kamsack, Dauphin and Gladstone. Everywhere north and south threshing was in evidence, and tales of wonderful crop yields were common talk.

There were murmurings of car shortages at different points, and it was evident that as the threshing nears completion the problem of storage space for grain will become acute. Only here and there had any serious attempts been made to provide granaries, and it was very difficult to understand how farmers could thresh out from 10,000 to 15,000 bushels of wheat, representing practically so many gold dollars, and leave it piled on the ground awaiting shipment.

For the majority of parliamentarians and for many of the pressmen, this was the initial trip west of the Great Lakes, and both parliament and press should be the better for the bird's-eye view obtained of Canada from coast to coast.

The opening of the new route throws no new illumination on the characters of the men at the head of the C.N.R. It only reasserts with emphasis what these men have been since they began to build railways on the continental scale.



C.N.R. discoverers at the new station in Regina.



At Edmonton, first put on the railway map by the C.N.R. in 1905.